helped him to settle on a definite course of action; and once having started on that course, it became impossible to turn back. Looking at it now, in the clear light of a later time, it is difficult to see just how he proposed to carry out successfully the course he adopted. It was evident that exposure was inevitable, and was limited only to the recovery of Mrs. Darcy or the return of the husband.

Perhaps Jack intended his action only as a temporary one, which would serve his purpose in bridging over the awkward emergency. Already there was forming in his mind a vague idea of keeping the whole thing a secret until Cordella could be found, and brought to his senses to such an extent that everything could be arranged creditably, and the family honor saved. Without going too far into the complexities which were certain to rise, he undoubtedly felt satisfied that his plan was one which would successfully meet all comment for the time being, and still would readily be explainable when explanation became necessary. What he did not foresee, in the blindness of his generosity, was the sacrifice devolving upon himself.

To accomplish his plan, it was necessary that the presence of Cordella's wife and child in his apartments, and even in London, must be kept a secret, if possible. He felt comparatively safe in relying upon Dr. Jellet's professional integrity. The greatest cause for his anxiety came from another direction. How was he to explain matters to his fiancée? She, last of all, must know the truth. He was in an agony of doubt and apprehension. It had been nearly two weeks since he had written to her. He knew that there was a pile of letters daily accumulating for him at the club, but he had not trusted himself to appear there. He would not send for them; there was something repulsive in the thought of dragging her even through her letters into the affair. What he had done was to write a brief note to his friend Dysart, saying that important business demanded his attention for a week or two, and begging him to explain as much to his sister. Dysart read this letter with considerable astonishment. He wondered why Jack did not write himself to Lena, and explain, but he had too much confidence in his friend to let anything like mistrust creep into his thoughts about him; and although he shrewdly surmised that Jack's "important business" had something to do with the mysterious message he had seen him receive that day at the club, his lack of suspicion and his delicacy prevented his intruding upon what the note indicated was strictly the private affair of Jack.

So he faithfully carried out his intended brother-in-law's instruction, and thereby removed a load of anxiety from his sister's heart. Like her brother, her faith in Croesus was unbounded, and she was satisfied to ask no questions. Down in her heart she may have felt a little resentment that any "business" could exclude her even temporarily from first place in her lover's thoughts; but Lena Dysart was a thoroughly sensible girl, and eminently given to taking practical views of all things. And so, for the past week or more, she and her lover had held no communication.

Little Elsie—the child's name was Elsie May Darcy—and Jack had become great friends. With the quick instinct of childhood, she put entire trust in him. He rarely went out without taking her with him. They went to the museums together, and on two afternoons to the Zoo; he bought her books, and read to her each evening before the appearance of good Mrs. Crump signaled the approach of bedtime. Old Dr. Jellet watched with interest the progress of their fellowship, and failed to discover anything parental in Darcy's attitude; the child liked to call him by his old nickname, "Croesus," and he in turn dubbed her "the Duchess,"—a name whose meaning her childish mind evidently misinterpreted, and which she frequently resented by vehemently exclaiming, "I ain't a dutchie!"

And so the days wore on, Jack dividing his time between the sick-room, his little charge,